

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUENOS 05375 171309Z

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TAGS: TGEN, AR, US

SUBJ: SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY - IMPLEMENTATION OF U.S. -
ARGENTINA BILATERAL

REF: BUENOS AIRES A -116

1. DURING RECENT INITIAL COURTESY CALL BY S&T COUNSELOR ON NEW UNDERSECRETARY FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CESAR VAZQUEZ, LATTER IDENTIFIED RESEARCH INTO FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE (AFTOSA) AS TOP PRIORITY FOR SECRETARIAT. VAZQUEZ INDICATED THAT COOPERATIVE RESEARCH IN THIS FIELD WITH U.S. WOULD BE MOST IMPORTANT.

2. S&T COUNSELOR RECALLED THAT OFFER WAS MADE TO GOA IN EARLY 1975 FOR COOPERATIVE WITH USDA PLUM ISLAND LABORATORY TO TEST NEW VACCINES, ON REIMBURSABLE BASIS, AND THAT THIS OFFER WAS NOT ACTED UPON BY PERONIST GOVERNMENT.

3. VAZQUEZ, AN ANIMAL VIROLOGIST HIMSELF WITH CONSIDERABLE EXPERIENCE IN U.S., STATED STRONG PREFERENCE FOR COOPERATION IN MORE BASIC RESEARCH ASPECT OF THE DISEASE WITH LEADING U.S. RESEARCH VIROLOGISTS. (HE MENTIONED DAVID BALTIMORE AS ONE POSSIBILITY). AT LEAST FROM HIS POINT OF VIEW, COOPERATION WITH PLUM ISLAND APPEARS MUCH LESS ADVANTAGOUS. ARGENTINE
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PAGE 02 BUENOS 05375 171309Z

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS COULD BE CONICET CENTER FOR ANIMAL

VIROLOGY (WHICH VAZQUEZ PREVIOUSLY HEADED) AND/OR INTA.

4. S&T COUNSELOR STATED THAT HE SAW NO REASON WHY SUCH COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH LEADING TOWARD BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE BASIC NATURE OF AFTOSA COULD NOT BE UNDERTAKEN UNDER THE S&T BILATERAL, WITH NSF SPONSORSHIP ON U.S. SIDE.

5. VAZQUEZ APPEARED UNFAMILIAR WITH MECHANICS OF BILATERAL IMPLEMENTATION. WHILE SECRETARIAT ADVISOR CROSS HAS THIS FAMILIARITY, VAZQUEZ DOES NOT EXPECT CROSS TO REMAIN ON FOR LONG DUE TO HEALTH REASONS. HE PROMISED TO PUT THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS CHIEF, WHEN HE IS APPOINTED, IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH S&T COUNSELOR. (COMMENT: CROSS HIMSELF HAS GIVEN US NO INDICATION OF IMMINENT RESIGNATION. HE CONTINUES TO WORK ON A PART-TIME BASIS.)

6. VAZQUEZ IDENTIFIED CHAGAS DISEASE AS THE NO. 2 PRIORITY AREA AND FOOD TECHNOLOGY R&D AS NO. 3.

7. VAZQUEZ EXPRESSED GREAT SATISFACTION AT RECENT PRESIDENTIAL DECISION WHICH ROUGHLY TRIPLED SALARIES TO CONICET CAREER INVESTIGATORS. (COMMENT: SALARIES FOR TOP RESEARCHERS RISE FROM PESO EQUIVALENT OF ABOUT \$120 TO ABOUT \$360, STILL WOEFULLY LOW BY INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS, EVEN WHEN CONSIDERING GENERALLY LOWER ARGENTINE COL.)
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